options. Government of Orissa has already taken up development of about 380 Km. length out of 980 Km. length of State roads. Action has been taken to prepare Detailed Project Report (DPR) for development of balance 600 Km. stretches. The National Highway Stretches in all the three States are being developed by this Ministry. There is no State road involved in this stretch in Andhra Pradesh. The State Government of Jharkhand has already been addressed to take up the development of the State road stretch on this route falling in the State.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) It is too early to indicate the time frame for completion of the entire route.

Manpower requirement in I.T. Sector

*347. SHRI T.T.V. DHINAKARAN: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether any study has been conducted to assess the manpower requirement in the Information Technology sector;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) if not, the reasons therefor; and

(d) the action taken to fill up the gap of demand and supply of manpower?

THE MINISTER FOR COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI DAYANIDHI MARAN): (a) to (d) The assessment of manpower requirement in Information Technology sector is a continuous process. Government of India along with industry association like National Association of Software & Service Companies (NASSCOM) has been continuously looking at this sector's requirements from time to time. It is seen that the issue of manpower requirement is not as much about the institutional seat availability and output as about the nature of skills and training provided in these institutions.

In order to impart the desired skill sets, various initiatives have been taken by the Government as also by NASSCOM. Some of the initiatives taken by Government through various Ministries and State Governments include:

- Establishment of Finishing Schools on a pilot basis by the Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD);
- DIT initiating measures to generate manpower in key verticals like VLSI Design and Information Security;
- DOEACC Society implementing programmes for generation of quality manpower in the area of Information Technology including ITeS/BPO; and
- Various State Governments have also initiated manpower development programmes in the area of IT/ITeS-BPO.

NASSCOM has been promoting changes in the existing curriculum in association with apex bodies in the country and also initiated *NASSCOM's Assessment of Competence programme (NAC)* to help the ITeS-BPO Industry.

Problems of NER

*348. SHRIMATI SYEDA ANWARA TAIMUR: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Eleventh Plan has recognized the special problems of the North East Region such as its geographical location, inadequacy of physical infrastructure, low level of entrepreneurship etc;

(b) if so, the steps Government have taken to tackle the North East Region problems during Eleventh Five Year Plan; and

(c) the funds allocated during the Eleventh Five Year Plan?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING (SHRI M.V. RAJASEKHARAN): (a) to (c) The Approach to the Eleventh Five Year Plan document, as approved by the National Development Council, has recognized the speical problems of North-East, such as its geographical location, inadequacy of physical infrastructure, low level of entrepreneurship, etc. The document has accorded high priority to improving the transport infrastructure, exploration of natural resources and encouragement to tourism, horticulture, agriculture and forestry. The outlays and priorities during the Eleventh Five Year Plan, both Central and State, would be determined accordingly considering the resource availability.